

KJHS

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY



KJHS MISSION:

“Working together for excellence within a caring community”

POLICY FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION (RSE)

This RSE policy supports the Aims of the school which seeks to “ensure quality of provision and experiences for all pupils”. Further it seeks to stimulate an appreciation of moral values.

1. RATIONALE

Education is concerned with the whole person in relation to their spiritual, physical, emotional, social and cognitive development.

The Department of Education requires all grant-aided schools to develop their own policy on how they will address Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) within the curriculum. RSE is a statutory element of the Revised N.I. Curriculum. It is via this policy that schools are expected to cover issues relating to relationships and sexuality, including those affecting LGB&T children and young people.

CCEA published updated guidance for primary and post-primary schools on RSE in August 2015. This guidance outlines the importance of RSE, the partnership approach needed for effective delivery of RSE (including the need for engagement with parents), the inclusive approach that is required (covering sexual orientation/gender identity) and the importance of the classroom environment. DE Circular 2015/22 - Relationship and sexuality education also provides help and advice for schools.

Definition as stated in CCEA 2015

“ Relationships and Sexuality Education is about more than simply educating young people about biological sexual reproduction. Although it is often referred to as ‘sex education’, this terminology is misleading. Relationships and Sexuality Education is a lifelong process encompassing:

- **the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills; and**
- **the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.”**

“Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to give and receive love; procreation and the aptitude for forming relationships with others”

CCEA Guidance for Post-Primary Schools: ‘Relationships and Sexuality Education’

“Our sexuality is a central and significant part of who we are and how we see ourselves in relation to other people. It is part of our overall health and contributes to our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being”.

CCEA Personal Development NI Curriculum

The centrality of Personal Development reflects the importance which CCEA places on delivering appropriate age-related Relationships and Sexuality Education within a clear values framework. The delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education contributes to ‘promoting pupils’ personal growth and development and in supporting their academic achievement’ (ETI, 2011, page 22) – that is, developing each child as a whole.

RSE at KJHS

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an important component of our Pastoral Care Provision at KJHS. This policy therefore contributes to our Pastoral Care Policy and outlines how we aim to ensure our pupils are well catered for in all aspects of this increasingly important area of their developing life.

As this RSE policy is set within the broader school context of Pastoral Care it should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour policy
- E-safety policy
- Drugs education policy

The RSE programme aims to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear moral framework with appreciation of current Northern Ireland legislation. It is a programme that is tailored to the age, maturity and understanding of our pupils and builds on the learning experiences from the primary curriculum.

Pupils are encouraged to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner and explore their rights and responsibilities involved within those relationships.

The RSE content encourages pupils to appreciate that friendships and relationships are based on self and mutual respect, empathy, honesty, loyalty, trust and commitment; and promotes the development of acceptance, tolerance, care, forgiveness and compassion within all relationships. Pupils are also encouraged to appreciate the value of family stability, marriage, permanent loving relationships and the responsibilities of parenthood; and to develop the skills involved in creating and sustaining stable relationships and the personal and social benefits they bring. As they mature, pupils are enabled to understand

Revised Sept 2017

the moral, psychological and health risks to themselves and other people of certain types of sexual behaviour and to develop appropriate decision making skills in relation to relationships and acceptance of responsibility.

This policy is intended to provide a framework through which young people can develop the skills, attitudes and values necessary to deal with the challenges which they will meet in this very sensitive area. We recognise the significant role which we play in helping and encouraging our young people to make informed, responsible decisions about their relationships and sexual health

AIMS

1. To enhance the personal development self esteem and well being of the young person and in doing so encourage personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour.
2. To develop self respect and self confidence.
3. To help the young person learn how to develop and enjoy healthy and respectful friendships and relationships with peers, teachers and other adults which are based on responsibility and mutual respect.
4. Provide guidance, knowledge and information to enable young people to develop in a healthy and responsible manner towards human sexuality.
5. Promote positive attitudes towards sexuality, personal health and relationships within a moral, social and spiritual framework
6. To help the young person value the importance of stable, loving, personal relationships, marriage and family life.
7. Prepare pupils for adult life
8. Identify and understand risk taking behaviour
9. Pupils will recognise inappropriate behaviours and touch.
10. Pupils will be taught how to navigate the digital landscape that is a huge part of their lives.

At this stage of their maturation, 11-14, our pupils need guidance from sympathetic and well-informed adults. Delivered in a secure and understanding environment, RSE strives to foster self respect in order to help children make good decisions.

Relationships and Sexuality Education in the Curriculum

In the areas of Home Economics, Science, Personal Development, R.E. and P.E., children should learn about changes which will occur as they grow older. Particularly around the 11-

14 age group they become more aware of their own sexuality and need information and guidance in coming to terms with physical and emotional changes and the impact these have in relationships with other people. Whilst most parents appreciate the need to educate their children on sex education, not all will be able to deliver this and therefore rely on schools to provide this in school.

RSE is connected to our preventative curriculum to build the confidence, self-esteem, and personal resiliencies of our pupils so that they can develop coping strategies and can make more positive choices in a range of situations.

The following subject areas CONTRIBUTE TO THE RSE PROGRAMME.

HOME ECONOMICS

Family Life Cycle: physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of each stage in life. Different types of families. Roles and relationships of members in a family. Healthy Life style.

SCIENCE

Understand human physiology in relation to puberty, fertility, sexual intercourse and reproduction Changes in puberty both physical and emotional. The Menstrual cycle, sexual intercourse, pregnancy and birth. Development of the young baby to adolescence. Responsible attitude to sexual relationships and parenthood. Contraception and sexually transmitted infections.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

At key stage 3 guidance materials for teaching are provided through the CCEA 'In-sync' programme Lessons adopt a learner centred approach and makes use of active learning strategies such as scenarios, role plays and debates. Pupils are able to develop thinking skills personal capabilities, attitudes and dispositions as well as knowledge about key issues connected to relationships and sexuality. A priority in PD is class collaboration to create a Class Charter a classroom charter which helps pupils to feel more at ease and more likely to express their feelings and opinions without embarrassment, judgement or ridicule from their peers.

(a) Self awareness

Sense of self, self esteem, personal morals, values and beliefs. Influences on a young person- eg social media, risk taking behaviour.

(b) Personal Health

Revised Sept 2017

Strategies to manage the effects of change on body, mind and behaviour.

(c) Relationships

Qualities of loving, respectful relationships including friendships. How to deal with challenging relationships and resolve conflict. Implications of sexual maturation. Emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual activity.

(d) Racism

Respect for different races, cultures, religions etc.

R.E.

Different types of relationships – family, friends, boy/girl. What is important in a good relationship – communication, honesty, trust etc. Consequences when these are absent.

P.E.

In P.E. relationships are emphasized through promoting good sporting behaviour and respect not only between our own pupils but those from other schools as well. In this subject area there is also a unique opportunity to speak with groups of boys and girls separately about issues regarding puberty, menstruation and personal hygiene.

Teaching Staff

The Pastoral Team (Year Heads and Form Teachers) also have a valuable role in delivering aspects of the RSE Programme. Staff development will seek to build the capacity of staff to respond to sensitive issues related to relationships and sexuality. Child Protection training plays a key role.

Staff will learn more about responding appropriately to students who approach them with pastoral concerns and in recognising symptoms /signs of sexual exploitation. Staff are also made aware of their professional and legal responsibility to refer any concerns.

DESIRED OUTCOMES ACROSS THE RSE CURRICULUM

1. Responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions.
2. Enhanced self-awareness and self-esteem.
3. Healthy and respectful friendships and relationships with each other and all members of staff.
4. Confidence in making healthy choices regarding their sexuality.
5. A sense of value for family life and an appreciation of the responsibilities of parenthood.

SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES ACROSS THE RSE CURRICULUM

- Communication
- Assertiveness
- Self Management
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Working with others
- Managing Information

External Agencies

Some aspects of the RSE programme are delivered by external agencies such as 'Love for Life' and the PSNI. These programmes supplement and complement internal provision. Parents are informed in the event of external agency involvement and are presented with a brief synopsis of proposed content. At least one teacher is always present when an external agency is delivering an aspect of the RSE programme.

ISSUES Responding to sensitive issues

We recognise that, on occasion, certain sensitive issues may require consideration. When attempting to deal with these issues the following positions and procedures will be adopted:

1. The status of the family

Revised Sept 2017

The school supports the institutions of marriage and the family, while being sensitive to those with different family circumstances. Marriage will be presented as the ideal to which most aspire, being achieved for many through hard work and commitment.

2. Confidentiality and Child Protection

Staff cannot give a guarantee of confidentiality to pupils around issues relating to child protection. If details are revealed that would lead staff to suspect that sexual abuse is involved, the teacher must follow the child protection procedures outlined in that policy. This too would apply where there is suspicion that a pupil is involved in sexual relationships.

Staff will follow KJHS CP protocols- **When we become aware of young people below the age of consent (16) engaging in sexual activity or, where we have concerns they are in a sexual relationship, the Designated Teacher has a duty to share this information with Social Services.**

Confidentiality in the Classroom

A pupil's right to privacy will be respected at all times and no pupil will be expected to ask or answer any personal questions.

3. The promotion of abstinence

In line with the school ethos, sexual abstinence should be promoted until young people are physically and emotionally mature enough to understand the consequences and their inherent responsibilities. Sexual abstinence before marriage, and fidelity within it, will be presented as a positive and desirable option and an achievable reality.

4, Sexual Identity and Orientation

Heterosexual relationships will be presented as the main context for sexual intimacy, reflecting the ethos of the school. Respect for all people regardless of sexual orientation will be promoted in line with the school ethos – no pupils should be isolated on the grounds of their sexual orientation. Pupils should have the right to hold different views/lifestyles in a peaceful manner. Antagonism/bullying or other forms of abuse against pupils who reveal that they are LGBT will not be tolerated by the school.

“All pupils have the right to learn in a safe environment: to be treated with respect and dignity: and not to be treated any less favourably on the grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.”

Equality commission

Bullying on the grounds of sexual orientation, is as unacceptable as it is in any other situation where someone is mistreated or bullied because of their differences from those who are perceived to be the majority. All issues relating to bullying on the grounds of sexual orientation or any other form of homophobic abuse will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

At KJHS we strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

5. Pregnancy

In the event of a young woman informing the school that she is pregnant we will consider it a child protection issue. Advice will initially be sought from the school's designated teacher for child protection and if it is deemed necessary the school will follow its child protection guidelines.

6. 'Risky' / Vulnerable children

'Risky' children display behaviours that may be harmful to other children. Vulnerable children are more prone to abuse from others. Whilst these children have a right to education the school has an obligation to ensure the well being of the entire school population. In order to do so we will carry out a risk assessment.

7. Sexting

'Sexting' is creating, sharing and forwarding sexually suggestive, nude or nearly nude images through mobile phones and the internet (Lenhart, 2009). In PD young people are given the opportunity to explore the issue of 'sexting'. Through RSE young people are taught how to safely navigate the digital landscape which plays such an integral role in their lives. This enables them to be able to:

8. Grooming

- Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.
- Adults may misuse online settings eg chat rooms, social and gaming environments and other forms of digital communications, to try and establish contact with children and young people or to share information with other perpetrators, which creates a particular problem because this can occur in real

time and there is no permanent record of the interaction or discussion held or information shared.

Through RSE pupils will

- Identify potential threats or dangers, including all forms of emotional, physical and sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Make informed choices and decisions
- Build their resilience, and
- Be aware of strategies which they can use to protect themselves

Pupils affected by such issues are given appropriate support

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's *Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland (2013–2020)* public consultation document recognises that 'schools are in a unique position to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children' (DHSSPS, 2013, page 43). Through the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education, young people can explore sensitive issues such as domestic violence and sexual abuse in an age-appropriate way, and develop appropriate behaviour to protect themselves (DHSSPS, 2013).

Parental Partnership

We recognise that parents have the prime responsibility for bringing up their children and we will therefore seek to ensure that our RSE programme complements and is supportive of the parents' role. We work in partnership with parents, particularly in relation to any sensitive issues outlined above. The school is willing to discuss with concerned parents any aspects of the RSE programme that they require clarity on. We recognise this is a sensitive area and we deliver RSE in the context of our school ethos.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE programme is kept under review. The aim of the evaluation process is to ensure that:

- The RSE Policy continues to comply with legislation and guidelines
- Classroom practice continues to reflect the Policy and the needs of pupils
- Teaching resources are regularly reviewed and updated
- External agency input is evaluated regularly
- As part of SDP 2017-20 feedback from parent and pupil voice will be sought to further improve provision for our young people.

PUPILS presenting with difficulties regarding any of these issues in any subject areas will be dealt with by subject teachers, HoD's, HoY's, SENCo, Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Vice-Principal, and/or one of the schools' two counsellors.

PARENTS who require further information or clarification of any of the content of this policy should contact school (028 3833 2021) and ask for the Vice-Principal.

This policy draws on guidance and content from

- DENI circulars 2001/15, 2010/01, 2013/16, 2015/22
- CCEA Guidance for Post-Primary Schools: Relationships and Sexuality Education (2001)
- CCEA Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance: An update for Post Primary Schools (2015)
- DENI Letter Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) January 2014
- ETI – Report of an Evaluation of Relationships and Sexuality Education in Post-Primary School (2011).

Revised Sept 2017

- Equality Commission's Eliminating Sexual Orientation Discrimination in N Ireland
March 2009
- Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 – revised February 2009
- DHSS Sexual Health Promotion: Strategy and Action Plan 2008-2013, December 2008
- CCEA Personal Development NI Curriculum 2007
- The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations NI 2006
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998